

# IRRIGATE EFFICIENTLY

The irrigation system that’s best for your landscape depends on the water needs of your plants and turf areas. Water turf plots separately and group plants with like water needs together in their own zone. Keep in mind that irrigation needs change with the weather and season and that xeric plants require supplemental watering until they become established.

Efficient irrigation begins with utilizing the proper system. Below are examples of basic irrigation systems and their components:

- **SPRINKLER-BASED SYSTEMS:** This system delivers water through a series of underground pipes to individual sprinklers relying on your home’s water pressure to release it with enough force to produce a spray.
- **IMPACT ROTORS:** Best used for large lawn and garden areas since they have the longest range and generally the highest precipitation rate.
- **GEAR-DRIVE ROTORS:** These heads are suited for watering slopes where runoff is a problem. They deliver sweeping streams of water that cover a large area.



- **FAN SPRAYS AND BUBBLERS:** They are commonly used for small areas of turf and flower beds. These stationery heads do not rotate or move, but emit a fan of water.

- **DRIP AND MICRO-IRRIGATION:** These systems apply water directly to the individual plants or small areas of plants. Drip systems use small emitters installed in water lines to drip water at a constant, slow rate. Micro-irrigation systems use miniature sprinklers installed in small water lines to apply water.
- **HOSE-END SYSTEMS:** Deliver water through a garden hose attached to an outdoor spigot. Set these up as either sprinkler, drip, or soaker hose systems.

## IRRIGATION WATER-SAVING TIPS

Simple changes to your irrigation system can save you water and money, as well as enhance your landscape’s health and appearance. You can make these minor adjustments and repairs yourself:

- **Turn off or Remove Unneeded Sprinklers**  
Some spray nozzles may no longer be needed as plants become established or change.
- Check to see if your spray nozzles have screws or rings for adjustment.
- Remove and cap spray heads by excavating the soil around them, unscrewing the sprinkler body and replacing it with a screw-on cap or plug. Removal prevents damage or lingering drips to shutoff heads that still pop up when the system is watering.
- **Replace Spray Nozzles to Match the Area Watered**  
Installing spray nozzles, with a spray radius and pattern that matches the area watered, can eliminate over-watered areas or dry spots.
- **Move or Raise Blocked Spray Heads**  
Spray heads that become blocked by thatch buildup or plant foliage may create dry spots or erosion. Move or raise the heads to a place where they can spray freely.
- **Check Your Watering System**  
Frequently run your watering system and check for broken heads, leaks, plants blocking heads, standing water and other problems.



A WATER CONSERVATION EDUCATION PROJECT